

MD HB 1342 Letter of Support 26Mar2021.pdf

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March 26, 2021

Kite Pharma
9021 Bennett Creek Blvd
Frederick, MD 21704

Senator Delores Kelley
Chair, Senate Finance

And

Senator Brian Feldman
Vice Chair, Senate Finance

3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 1342, Partnership for Workforce Quality Program—
Alterations

Dear Senators Kelley and Feldman:

On behalf of Kite Pharma, Inc., a cell therapy company in Maryland focused on curing cancer, I am writing to share our support for HB 1342. As a member of the growing life science community in Maryland, we know first-hand that workforce development is key to our industry's growth and the economic impact we have on the state.

HB 1342 expands the current Partnership for Workforce Quality Program (Program) which provides matching grant funding to Maryland manufacturing and technology employers for workforce training. The Program currently supports training needs related to upgrading employee skills, but with the proposed extension in the bill, the Program will also be available for training of new employees.

This Program is critically important to both to Maryland employers and employees. In surveys of Program recipients by the Department of Commerce, feedback has been consistent and positive that effective training resulted in employers foreseeing greater business growth and productivity. For employees, in a time where many of our workplaces are evolving in skill needs, this Program allows employers to consider new hires who may be new to a field or who may need additional skills to continue to grow professionally.

We encourage the Senate Finance Committee to support HB 1342.

Sincerely,



Brian J. Stamper
Director of Manufacturing, Kite Pharma

HB1342 - Senate_FAV_MTC_Eco. Dev. - Partnership fo

Uploaded by: Kasemeyer, Pam

Position: FAV



TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Maryland Department of Commerce

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: March 30, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1342 – *Economic Development – Partnership for Workforce Quality Program – Alterations*

The Maryland Tech Council (MTC) is a collaborative community, actively engaged in building stronger life science and technology companies by supporting the efforts of our individual members who are saving and improving lives through innovation. We support our member companies who are driving innovation through advocacy, education, workforce development, cost savings programs, and connecting entrepreneurial minds. The valuable resources we provide to our members help them reach their full potential making Maryland a global leader in the life sciences and technology industries. On behalf of MTC, we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 1342.

House Bill 1342 expands the purpose of the Partnership for Workforce Quality Program and the eligible uses of the grant under the Program to include training for new employees. The Partnership for Workforce Quality Program currently provides training services to improve the competitiveness and productivity of the State's workforce as well as the business community and upgrades employee skills related to new technologies or production processes. It also assists employers located in the State in promoting employment stability. Including the training of new employees as an eligible use under the Program will serve to enhance and expand the qualified workforce available to the life sciences and technology industries in the State and will further enhance the effectiveness of the Program in meeting its objectives. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
410-244-7000

MD MEP Support of HB 1342 - PWQ - Senate Finance.p

Uploaded by: Kelleher, Mike

Position: FAV



The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Legislative Support for House Bill 1342 – Economic Development – Partnership for Workforce Quality

Dear Committee Chair Kelley and Members:

I am writing this letter to express my support for House Bill 1342; entitled Economic Development – Partnership for Workforce Quality – Program Alterations.

Maryland's Partnership for Workforce Quality (PWQ) program has been an invaluable resource for the manufacturing sector, enabling manufacturers of all sizes and all industries to provide training in an effort to upskill their existing workforce. Workforce and talent development remains the greatest challenge faced by manufacturers throughout the State of Maryland. PWQ has providing funding assistance, enabling these manufacturers to train and upskill their existing workforce through incumbent worker training, yielding significant results. House Bill 1342 will enable manufacturers to expand this training to include newly hired individuals, addressing the increasing skills gap in the manufacturing sector and positively impact a greater number of Maryland manufacturing organizations.

I serve as the Executive Director for the Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MD MEP). MD MEP is a non-profit organization focused on growing and strengthening Maryland manufacturers. On an annual basis, MD MEP administers funding and programs that create more than \$150 million in economic impact and create or retain more than 1,100 jobs.

Since 2018, MD MEP has referred nearly a dozen manufacturers to the PWQ program for funding assistance to offset the cost of training for their incumbent workforce. Through these efforts, these companies have trained 266 workers on critical manufacturing skills like machining, welding, process improvement, quality and the adoption of new technologies and equipment. These training activities and the resultant impacts would not have been possible without the support of PWQ.

The expansion of PWQ to provide training to newly hired workers will increase this impact and improve the overall competitiveness of Maryland within the manufacturing sector. For these reasons, I am strongly in support of House Bill 1342. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Kelleher
Executive Director, MD MEP

HB 1342_PWQ_Support_Senate.pdf

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Position: FAV



Larry Hogan | Governor
Boyd Rutherford | Lt. Governor
Kelly M. Schulz | Secretary of Commerce

DATE: March 30, 2021 **COMMITTEE:** Senate Finance
BILL NO: House Bill 1342
BILL TITLE: Economic Development - Partnership for Workforce Quality Program
– Alterations
POSITION: Support

The Maryland Department of Commerce supports House Bill 1342 – Economic Development - Partnership for Workforce Quality Program – Alterations.

Bill Summary:

HB 1342 alters the existing Partnership for Workforce Quality (PWQ) program by expanding the program eligibility to include new employee training.

Background:

The PWQ program was established in 1989 and is administered by the Department of Commerce (Commerce). PWQ encourages Maryland companies to invest in training for employees by providing reimbursable grants that match (1:1) the investments of Maryland’s manufacturing and technology companies in employee training, thus helping the companies improve their efficiency, develop quality management practices, modernized operations, and upgrade manufacturing processes. As a result, companies are better equipped to expand in Maryland and to compete in the global marketplace.

Funded annually through general and special funds, PWQ helps participating companies develop and implement training systems to improve business competitiveness and worker productivity, upgrade the skills of workers to accommodate new technologies and production processes, and promote employment stability. Since the program’s inception in 1989, the PWQ Program has invested in nearly \$39 million of training for more than 99,000 employee-training slots in Maryland companies.

Rationale:

The existing PWQ statute is designed specifically to upgrade or retain existing Maryland-based employees of manufacturers or businesses threatened by the pressure of increased foreign or domestic competition. Currently, the program does not cover new workforce development and training-related activities necessary in today’s high-tech economy.

Industries across the board are having difficulty hiring qualified applicants. The PWQ program does not address nontraditional applicants aiming to enter a new field or employers seeking to expand operations that need to hire and train additional employees. By expanding PWQ to include reimbursement of costs related to training new employees, the State can incentivize employers to hire employees who might not otherwise have qualified due to a skills gap and could encourage growth by increasing the number of new jobs created in the State.

Commerce respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 1342.